10: d'Orleans T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
563, 634, 721, 175.72 Ethnic subgroups

[LSS: For the history of the family of Deo Van Tri, chief of the Lai district and for the history of the wars in the area of Laichau and Luang Prabang, see Indochina, category 116, pp. 204-209.]

"It may be remarked that the centre of Indo-China, and especially the region traversed by the upper course of the Mekong, is made up of kingdoms and principalities, formed for the most part out of the same territory which surrounds a town, always at loggerheads with one another, absorbed one after the other by the strongest States and only maintaining their independence in the interval through the rivalry of their powerful neighbours. Paying tribute first to the one side and then to the other, sometimes [292] to both at once, these Laos States have often been as reasonably considered Burmese as Annamite, or later on, as Siamese. At war with Annam now and again, the Laotians of this region conquered Tonquin eight centuries ago, but it is, none the less, with the Court of Hué that Luang Prabang preserves the closest ties. The chronicles of the town, which have been very conscientiously kept and which were saved from the flames by M. Pavie, testify in many passages to this state of dependency; and among these annals may be found the narrative of an invasion of Annamite troops in the seventeenth century which led to the suicide of the sovereign of Luang Prabang. (1) At a more

1. The legend has it that the king, when on the point of being made prisoner, had himself attached to the trunk of an elephant and the animal taken down into the river. A pagoda was erected in memory of the drowned ruler.

recent date eye-witnesses have related the expedition of Deo Van Tri referred to in a previous chapter, the Laĩ chief assuming his right to treat with the king upon behalf of the Emperor of Annam."

"Without seeking to undertake an historical work, which would carry us too far, we have only to glance over some of the old maps to find the justification for that phrase of Garnier's which should have been the groundwork of our policy in this region. 'What we had to do was to make the king of Luang Prabang feel that a day might come when we should take up the rights exercised over his principality by the Court of Hué, which has now become once more our vassal. Unfortunately, the Siamese, whose influence had extended, after 1838 (2) towards Luang Prabang, came and [293] established

2. According to Hallett (A Thousand Miles on an Elephant, p. 201), the Shan States of Vienchang and of Luang Prabang became tributary to Siam. The Siamese authority in the Shan States consisted in arranging their external affairs and sanctioning the nomination of their chiefs. In return for the protection of Siam against the foreign invaders, three States consented to send a triennial tribute, consisting of gold and silver boxes, chased cellarettes and salt-cellars, as well as gold and silver trees worth from fifteen to thirty-five pounds each. To these statements of Hallett as to the early date at which Luang Prabang became tributary to Siam, I would rejoin that the chronicles of Luang Prabang, which have been consulted by M. Pavie, do not contain any

allusions to Siam at an earlier period than the last half-century. The Laï chronicle, to which I referred above when dealing with Deo Van Tri, only alluded to the state of dependency in which the King of Luang Prabang stood with regard to Annam.

M. Deschanel would seem to have anticipated the views suggested, if not openly expressed by Hallett, Colquhoun and Lord Lamington, when he wrote in 1885: 'The day that England seizes Burmah, our authority in the eastern part of the Indo-Chinese peninsula will receive a severe shock. If we do not take our precautions (in the Upper Laos) the English, once established at Xieng Maï (in Siamese Laos) will be masters, morally speaking, of the valley of the Mekong and the important position of Luang Prabang, which was tributary to Annam. Thus cut off from the great river, in danger of seeing England secure the protectorate of Siam, our situation in Indo-China will be very much weakened.'--Compare Garnier above,

themselves there for good a few years ago, when they learnt that the French were approaching from the direction of Tonquin. I have already related, when speaking of Deo Van Tri, the ambush set for his brothers, the Siamese officers being accompanied by an Englishman, one McCarthy, who, with another of his compatriots, had been appointed agent at Luang Prabang. I have also referred to the meeting of French and Siamese troops in the plain of Theng, and the retreat of the latter. We were not able to push on any further, for the aged king of Luang Prabang, who [294] had at one time hoped to be backed up by our arms, foresaw the policy of non-intervention and excessive prudence which would be impressed upon our officers. He recognised that the valiant champions of our colonial extension would have their hands tied and that it would be no use reckoning upon us. 'The Siamese are coming up,' he said to Dr. Neis; 'we are lost.'

As a matter of fact, while we were standing still, the Siamese were advancing, and it is easy to understand the political course followed by the Court of Bangkok; as long as it is left free, it is always marching forward, occupying advance posts, sometimes with only seven or eight militia men, but still making a reality of its occupation. But for Colonel Pennequin, Theng would have fared no better than all the important centres upon the Mekong as far as Cambodia and than several towns between the coast and the river; one can feel that these Siamese troops, when they are on the march, have behind them

10: d'Orleans--292-294 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos-4
116, 648, 721, 177.72 France
636.72

the moral if not the effective support of intelligent and fearless persons, who are used to getting their way by firm speaking, the only obstacles which they are likely to encounter from European nations being idle diplomatic protests."

10: d'Orleans--305-306 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos-1-2
116, 563, 567, 721

"In former times the men of the conquering race made inroads into the Kas villages and carried off a number of the inhabitants as slaves, the males being seized in preference to the females, while with the people of the plain the reverse was the case. Now the king has abolished slavery in theory, though in reality it still exists; (1) but

1. Slavery as practised upon the Kas is regarded as legal among the Laotians; a father who is poor and has a large family, often sells one or two of his sons, at the rate of fifteen rupees if they are very young, and of from twenty to forty for adults. They are then employed as boatmen.

the armed raids are not of frequent occurrence. Here, as is the case with certain European nations upon the coast of Africa, who claim [306] to be fighting the battle of liberty, the term forced labour is substituted for slavery, because it sounds better. I do not wish to criticise the generous sentiments which humanitarian ideas have evoked against slavery, but I am inclined to ask myself whether, taking everything into account, this condition is not often preferable for the people of the inferior races to liberty without the means of livelihood.

I was talking with a young slave who had been purchased by the mother-in-law of one of our interpreters. and he did not seem at all desirous of being freed. His parents, too

poor to support him, had sold him, he was well-fed and happy with his masters, and asked for nothing better."

which we have now reached they were in full struggle against the Chams. The diversion of the king of Sukhothaï was therefore inopportune and vexing, and so King Triet-Hoàng was preparing to cross the Cordillera and have done with this new enemy when death overtook him and prevented him from carrying out his plan. "As for the king of Sukhothaï, we do not know the reason why he stopped his attacks." Cf. G. Maspero, op. cit. /Un empire colonial français: l'Indochine/, p. 110. 648* 175* 643*

Souvanna-Kham-Phong was therefore a vassal of Siam when, about 1320-1330, he drove his son Thao-Phi-Fa out of his States for having seduced one of his concubines, Nang-Ok-Khong.

FA-NGOUN (1316-1374), KING 1353-1373.

The exile, who was taken under escort on a raft as far as Khône, took refuge with the king of Cambodia who gave him a warm welcome. He brought with him his eldest son, Fa-Ngoun, who was brought up at the court of Angkor /42/ and was given the Kmer princess Nang-Yot-Kèo in marriage when he reached his majority. 643* 648* 175*

The king Paramathakhemaraja continued to endure the merciless struggle which the Thaïs of the Ménam had started against his predecessors more than a century before. After they were forced to evacuate the basin of the Ménam, and as a consequence all of western Laos, the Kmer kings were to find themselves directly threatened in their capital by the founding of Ayuthya not far from Angkor. Paramathakhemaraja therefore gave Fa-Ngoun and his father an army of ten thousand warriors to reconquer the region of Muong-Swa, hoping thereby to restore his influence there and to rely on it in the future in order to put a halt to the Siamese in Ayuthya. 643* 175* 726 648* 721

Expedition of the "ten thousand." Phi-Fa and Fa-Ngoun set forth. They overthrew the troops of the prince of Bassac who tried to bar their way and put to flight the prince of "Nam-Boun" (doubtless Cammon-Kamkeut), who was terrified at the mere rumor of their exploits, without striking a single blow. When they reached Paksane they encountered Thao-Thiem-Kham-Gno, the heir apparent of Xieng-Khouang. The latter had been condemned to death by his father because he too had /43/ seduced

643* one of his father's wives. He was now wandering about haphazardly
175* and implored their protection.
726

648* Capture of Xieng-Khouang. Fearful lest there should be an alliance
721 between Souvanna-Kham-Phong and the king of Tran-Ninh (whose reinforcements might take them from the rear in their direct march on Muong-Swa), they agreed to support the rebel. They went up the Nam-Nhiep and lay siege to Xieng-Khouang which they took by assault and whose king was put to death and replaced by Kham-Gno who acknowledged himself their vassal.

Capture of Xieng-Thong (Luang-Prabang). Reinforced by a Phoueun contingent, they then moved forward towards Xieng-Dong-Xieng-Thong. Their troops were divided into two armies, and one of these, under the command of Fa-Ngoun, entered the valley of the Nam-Khane. The other, under Phi-Fa, went down the Nam-Suong,
721 but the latter was stricken with cholera and died on the march at Hat-
643* Thoi. When he reached Dane-Khoua, Fa-Ngoun demanded that his
726 grandfather, Kham-Phong, abdicate in his favor. The latter was
175* highly indignant and moved to attack his grandson, whom he en-
648* countered at Pak-Ming. His troops were defeated and had to retreat
/762/ in disorder, /44/ his capital was captured and the old sovereign, "mad with shame and grief," hanged himself in his palace at Xieng-Thong.

726 At the age of thirty-seven Fa-Ngoun proclaimed himself king of
643* "Lan-Xang" and at once demanded submission of all the Thai princes
175* of the Mékong. Without awaiting their "reactions" he set out to make
631 his authority accepted, and in a sort of triumphal march received the submission of all the chieftains of the northern muongs as far as the limits of the kingdoms of Xieng-Mai (Lan-Na) and Xieng-Houng (Sip-Song-Panas). He met with greater resistance in the south and had to enter into a struggle to the death against Phaya-Phao, prince of Vientiane, who had taken the leadership of the opposition.

175* The discovery by Georges Maspero in 1902, in the vicinity of the
633 present-day administrative capital of French Laos, of steles of Kmer
648* origin amidst the ruins of twenty-eight pagodas, makes it possible to
631 suppose that the first capital of the land was Say-Fong, that "dead city" stifled by the forest. In the time of its splendor it was the advanced citadel of Cambodian hegemony in Thai territory, but its importance declined quite rapidly, doubtless with the first blows struck against the suzerainty of Angkor by the kings of Sukhothai and

of Ayuthya. /45/ And even before it disappeared it had been supplanted by Vientiane, which was built some ten kilometers upstream, unless the two cities formed a single immense one or unless the first one moved without changing its name at first 175* 633 648* 631

Capture of Phaï-Nam (Vientiane) Whatever the case may be, the center of resistance against Fa-Ngoun was then called "Phaï-Nam" (thorny bamboos) because of the impenetrable vegetable belt which defended it like veritable ramparts. It resisted repeated assaults and Fa-Ngoun was able to get the better of it only by using a ruse. He had gold and silver projectiles shot at the bamboo enclosure and then simulated a retreat. The besieged army, seeing the royal troops fall back, thought that their delivery was at hand and came out to pick up the precious projectiles. Then the assailants suddenly returned to the charge and entered the city without difficulty (1). Phaya-Phao had to make his submission. 643* 721 175* 725 633 631

1. These tactics are celebrated in several Thaï legends to explain the capture of a stronghold.

He received his pardon and was kept on as governor of the principality.

In memory of this episode, the city was baptized /46/ "Vien-Kham" which signifies "gold enclosure." This was later corrupted to "Vientiane" (sandalwood enclosure) (1)

1. There is permanent confusion in the Laotian chronicles between the Vien-Kham on the banks of the Mékong and the Vien-Kham in Tran-Ninh.

Formation of the kingdom of Lan-Xang (1353). Fa-Ngoun, henceforth the uncontested master of a vast kingdom, gave it a strong organization and ruled over it as a despot. 643* 175* 642

He summoned an Oupahat or second king to him to assist him in his political duties and instituted a Council of ministers chosen from the princes of royal blood and arranged in a hierarchy according to their respective ranks and attributions. But he would suffer no infringement on his own authority, neither at court or in the provinces. He took terrible reprisals against the vassals who did not obey his orders blindly, and replaced nearly all of them in succession with mere governors as the fancy took him. /646/

645 who should be in the dynastic tradition. After a long deliberation
175° which was made laborious by the fact that Lane-Kham-Dèng's children
643° were minors, it offered the crown to Thao-Lu-Sai, the governor of Muong-Sai-Muoi and last legitimate son of Sam-Sène-Thaï. Thao-Lu-Sai accepted and mounted the throne under the name of Phaya-Sai-Tiakaphat.

643° Twenty-three years old, he assumed power under difficult condi-
175° tions. The excesses of Nang-Keo-Phimpha had indeed weakened royal authority within the country and aroused the attention of the neighboring princes who, whether tributaries or not, were more or
/668/ less jealous of the power of the king of Lan-Xang. The rich province of Vientiane had always retained an inclination /64/ towards independence, and its governor, Sai-Moni, thought that the moment had come to shake off the yoke, but he was assassinated before he even had time to set out on the march (1). The failure of this movement

/346/ 1. The temple of Wat-Thai is supposed to have been erected in his memory by the inhabitants of Vientiane.

which was crushed "in the egg" doubtless gave cause for reflection to the vassals, who lay quiet and congratulated themselves on their reserve when they realized that Tiakaphat was a wise, steadfast and prudent sovereign who was quite determined to maintain the integrity of his States. He governed peaceably for forty years, intelligently seconded in the last years of his reign by his eldest son Thao-Kone-Kèo, who rapidly acquired an enlightened knowledge of the kingdom's affairs and an unquestioned authority in the Council of Ministers. The king created the unprecedented title of Sene-Muong for him, named him prince of Xieng-Lo and gave him the position of Oupahat.

721 The Annamite Invasion (1478-1479). Meanwhile the Annamites
643° were only waiting for an opportunity to extract vengeance for the
175° affront which Lê-Loi had once suffered and also to consolidate their western frontier which lay open on the Black River. /65/ If they had not done so before it was only because they had been prevented by the incessant incursions of the Chams on their southern frontiers, but in 1471 the king Lê-Thanh-Tôn occupied the land of Qui-Nhon and succeeded in destroying the kingdom of Champa once and for all, and in 1478 he used a futile incident as a pretext for invading Lan-Xang. If we are to believe the legend, Tiakaphat had refused

to send him a young white elephant captured by the Khas, after having promised explicitly to deliver it to him through the intermediary of Boutevong, the king of Tran-Ninh (1). But in reality 721 643* 175*

1. According to a popular tale, the history of this offering was a complete invention by Boutevong and the king of Annam had this prince's head cut off as a punishment for his lie. The son and successor of Boutevong is then supposed to have perfidiously told the Oupahat Kone-Kèo that Lê-Thanh-Tôn only wanted the claws and a few hairs from the sacred animal. Kone-Kèo sent these relics in a golden coffer, but the king of the Phoueuns replaced the claws and hairs with elephant excrement. The king of Annam was convinced that the king of Lan-Xang wished to do him a mortal wrong and sent "six immense armies" against Luang-Prabang.

the king of Annam had been making sizeable preparations for a whole year and had made sure that Tiakaphat's vassals who governed the frontier provinces would either cooperate or remain benevolent neutrals.

/66/ Siege and capture of the capital (1479). In 1479 Lê-Thanh-Tôn placed his armies under General Phoua-Khouang-Soun, who installed himself firmly in Xieng-Khouang in order to cut off all aid to Lan-Xang. Then he had his troops execute a convergent march. They crossed the various passes of the Annamitic Chain and advanced in compact masses towards Muong-Swa, which they besieged. 726 643* 175*

The Oupahat Kone-Kèo took command of the Laotian troops without delay, assisted by the generals Mun-Luong, Mun-Bouone and Mun-La. He placed a strong cover over the approaches to the capital but could not prevent the Annamite soldiers from penetrating it. Then the struggle became desperate, with the warriors of Lan-Xang defending their city house by house while "the priests prayed in the temples and the women wept in the streets" (1). Kone-Kèo

1. Ibid. (legend).

and his lieutenants were killed near the royal palace of Xieng-Thong. Their death was the signal of the rout and the old king Tiakaphat fled in haste with his family, followed by the remains

663 Thais of the Menam, on the other hand, who were rid of the Cam-
175* bodians in the south but were pressed by the Burmese in the north, were
633 coming there in increasing numbers in search of gum lac and benzoin,
/439/ which they took back with them and sold to the Dutch navigators who had been sailing the waters of the Indian Ocean ever since the sixteenth century.

643* War against Ayuthya (1536). Phothisarath had just settled in
721 Vientiane when he received a visit from Ekaracha, the prince of
175* Ayuthya, who had been driven out and was being pursued by his relative the Phaya-Attit. He welcomed the fugitive and refused to give him up, and war was the result. The king of Ayuthya was halted at Muong-Khuk (1) by the Lan-Xang troops before he could even cross

1. On the right bank, a little way downstream from Vientiane.

the river and had to beat a retreat. He died when he reached home from a wound received in the course of the battle.

643* Relations with Annam. Phothisarath confirmed his peaceful in-
648* tentions with respect to the king of Annam. Relations between the
175* two peoples had become more frequent since their violent /75/ contact in 1479, and quite a few Annamites had remained in Lan-Xang after the retreat of Lê-Thanh-Tôn's troops. The two sovereigns exchanged presents and established neighborly relations between their States which were marked by a cordiality heretofore unknown, even before Lê-Loi and Lane-Kham-Dèng. This was true to such a degree that Lan-Xang became the refuge of the partisans of the Lê while the Mac usurpers held sway. One of these partisans, Nguyên-Câm, who was the ancestor of the present royal family, came to seek asylum there around 1530.

Succession of Xieng-Mai. In 1546 the throne of Lan-Na (Xieng-Mai) became vacant, and Phothisarath claimed the succession rights which he held through his mother, a princess of that kingdom. To establish his claim he sent the governor Sene-Si-Mun-Muong with a sizeable armed force which dispersed the local pretenders and rapidly overcame any hesitation on the part of the latters' partisans. The chief of the bonzes came in person to offer the crown of Lan-Na to the king of Lan-Xang, and the king accepted it in behalf of his eldest son,

643* 576 through the mouth of his chancellor and never speaks to them except through a go-between..."

643* 648* 175 584 A "Trojan War" in Tran-Ninh (1651-1652). Under the firm hand of such a monarch, the vassals and tributary princes eagerly complied with the slightest of their sovereign's orders. Great was the astonishment, therefore, when it was learned in 1651 that Chao-Kham-Xan, king of Xieng-Khouang, whom Souligna had asked for the hand of his daughter Nang-Ken-Chan in marriage, had dared to reply that the princess was not free and that he declined the honor of this alliance. Enflamed by the accounts which had been given him of the beauty and wisdom of the "pearl" of Tran-Ninh, the king of Lan-Xang pretended not to notice the affront but gallantly persisted and sent a messenger to take rich gifts to the girl. In vain. Then Souligna sent for the princess manu militari. The detachment was brought to an abrupt halt by the troops of King Chao-Kham-Xan and had to retrace its steps, while the people of Xieng-Khouang foresaw the worst and hastily built a fortress at Pana to protect their capital (1).

1. Cf. Captain de Pelacot, op. cit. /"Le Tran-Ninh historique." Revue indochinoise. Hanci, 1896./

643* 648* 721 175* Souligna decided that a small army of two thousand men would be enough to punish Chao-Kham-Xan for his insolence. This force did in fact take the stronghold of Pana by surprise and penetrate into Xieng-Khouang on a bridge /118/ thrown over the ramparts. The king, a prisoner in his own palace, had to give in. But although he surrendered to force he kept a stubborn rancor over this misadventure which was inherited by his son Chao-Kham-Lan who succeeded him in 1688. This prince raised a thousand difficulties in paying the traditional tribute to Lan-Xang, and friendly relations between the two sister states were ended for good and all. In the eighteenth century Xieng-Khouang was to be engaged in a permanent struggle with Souligna's successors, and in the nineteenth century Chao-Noi, a king of Tran-Ninh, was to deliver up the unfortunate king Anou, the last monarch of Vientiane, to Siam.

643* 175* But let us not anticipate further on these events but rather return to the year 1652, when Lan-Xang was shining with all its splendor and when the minor expedition in Xieng-Khouang meant no more to its king than a simple demonstration of his power and his authority.

It was in this holy place that Anou received /164/ his subjects' 796
and vassals' oaths of fidelity twice a year up until 1827. The 643*
ceremony was continued, after his downfall, in honor of the king 175*
of Siam. Nowadays it takes place in April and November of each
year and the oath, accompanied by prayers from the bonzes, is
addressed to the president of the French Republic in accordance
with the traditional formula: "May any one of us who breaks this /695/
oath be devoured by the tiger, may he be struck by lightning, may
his soul burn in blazing flames... etc." (1).

1. A monastery was recently built near the cloister, which 792
has been transformed into a museum. A center of religious
learning has been revived there by the leader of the bonzes
who is presently in charge of it.

Voyage to Bangkok (1825). In the meantime Anou kept closely 643*
informed of the events which were transpiring in the west of the 648*
Indo-Chinese peninsula. In the south the Siamese had come to 175*
grips with the Annamites in Cambodian territory, and in the north
the British in India were extending their sphere of action towards
Burma in a way which was disturbing for the Thai regions of the
basin of the Salouen and the Upper Menam. In 1825 he went to
Bangkok to attend the funeral of king Phan-Dinh- /165/ /Page 165
is devoted to an illustration: "Square of the temple of Sisaket at
Vientiane."--Translator/ /166/ Klang, and there he learned that
a British delegation had entered into ticklish negotiations with the
government of the deceased king and that the intransigence of the
English was causing the greatest difficulties at the court. He profited
thereby in order to ask permission to repatriate to his country the
Laotian families who had been taken captive in the course of the
preceding century, but was given a categorical refusal (1).

1. He was told that the Laotian families had been settled
in Siam for too long a time not to have become completely
Siamese. Cf. H.R.H. Phanuphanthuvongswardja, op. cit.
/Repression de la revolte de Vientiane. Bangkok, 1926./

Hiding his disappointment, he regained his capital greatly dis- /721/
contented. The following year, when the rumor reached Vientiane
that the Anglo-Siamese parleys had been broken off and that a

643* British fleet was going to threaten Bangkok (2), he suddenly cast
648*
175*

2. In fact, Captain Burney's mission was to obtain, by peaceful means, a trade treaty which would open the port of Bangkok to the British.

off his mask and declared war.

648* Opening of hostilities against Siam (1826). The pretext invoked
175* has remained rather obscure and the Siamese accounts pass over the
721 matter in silence, merely accusing Anou of ingratitude and ambi-
● tion (3). According to a Laotian version, Anou /167/ had sent a

3. Cf. H.R.H. Phanuphanthuvongswardja, op. cit. /Repression de la revolte de Vientiane, Bangkok, 1926./

number of his subjects to the Bangkok government to work at building roads. The labor draft had been judged too small, his delegate had replied arrogantly to the observations of the Siamese, and when the king of Vientiane was informed of the incident he deliberately opened hostilities.

648 March on Korat and Bangkok. Whatever the case may be, the
175* first operations were unleashed with lightning-like rapidity. Three
726 armies were sent against Bangkok, one leaving from Oubone and led by Chao-Ngo, the second concentrated at Roi-Et and led by the Oupahat Tissa, and the third under the command of Anou himself, seconded by his sons Chao-Po and Chao-Ngao, and with Khorat as its objective.

These troops encountered but insignificant resistance (1) and

1. Anou is said to have safeguarded his rapid march by telling the population that he was hastening to the aid of the king of Siam, who was being attacked by the British. Cf. ibid.

news of the invasion had scarcely reached Bangkok when Anou, already established in Khorat, sent his advance guard to threaten Sraboury, which was three days' march from the capital.

/168/ Great was the disturbance among the Siamese, who dug trenches in all haste to protect their city. A first contingent was levied, and in a lucky sortie on "the Saturday of the fourth month of the waning moon" it succeeded in throwing the Laotian advance

727 ruins, for the city had been given over to fire and bloodshed. The
175* Siamese had deported six thousand families to the right bank of the Mekong, had taken all the elephants and removed four hundred warhorses. They had not, however, been able to lay hands on /174/ the royal treasures, which had been carefully hidden. Phia-Bodin had then left for Bangkok leaving matters in the hands of Phia-Papha and driving towards the Menam terrified throngs of men, women and children who were followed by long files of carts filled with plunder and statues taken from the overturned temples (1).

1. Including the Prabang, carried off for the second time.

645 Since Phia-Papha had only a small force at his disposal, he left
175* Vientiane, crossed the river, dispatched a messenger to his master and settled in Thabo to await the turn of events.

721 Battle of Makheng. According to a Siamese version, the Annamite
175* "commissioners" accompanying Anou interceded in his behalf and obtained his pardon. In this version, the king of Vientiane was given permission to settle in the city again, but then had all the Siamese who were there massacred by surprise, immediately sent out his troops in pursuit of Phia-Papha and was again defeated in the vicinity of Makheng (2).

2. Cf. Phanuphanthuvongswardja, op. cit. /Repression de la revolte de Vientiane, Bangkok, 1926./

726 In the meantime the king of Siam, at the news of the rebel's re-
643* turn, had sent out a new army 20,000 men strong which reached
175* /175/ the banks of the river in forced marches. Then Anou realized that struggle was impossible, and so as not to bring down further misfortunes on his subjects he resolved to go to China. He left by the valley of the Nam-Song with only one of his wives and 120 devoted partisans (1).

1. Cf. Captain de Pelacot, op. cit. /"Le Tran-Ninh historique." Revue indochinoise, Hanoi, 1896./

648* Chao-Noi delivers up Anou (1831). The Siamese general sus-
175* pected that he had made his way towards Tran-Ninh and sent orders

devoted to an illustration: "Junction of the Nam-Khane and the Mekong at Luang-Prabang." --Translator/ /183/ whom he had chosen in Luang-Prabang itself from the families of his mandarins. 643* 595 175*

KHAMONE-NOI, KING 1726-1727.

Khamone-Noi succeeded him and took as wives two of the dead king's daughters, Thene-Sao and Thene-Kham. But Intha-Som at once began to agitate. Not daring to hope that the family of the Sip-Song-Panas would lend him aid against one of its children, he addressed himself to some newcomers to the land who had been infiltrating for some time into the valley of the Nam-Ou. These were the "Mousseux," mountainfolk driven out of Yunnan by the religious wars (1). Although their temperament was not at all war- /595/ 175* 669 643* 563 /167/

1. Violent Moslem rebellions were then devastating southern China.

like, these fugitives nevertheless agreed, since they had no choice, to lend their aid to Intha-Som. In return the latter promised their leaders La-Nga and Noli that he would recognize and confirm their occupation of Muong-Yo and Boun-Neua as soon as he became king. 721 643* 175* 669 563

Submission of Intha-Som (1726). But the Mousseux (2), al-

2. The word "Mousseux" is the word which most nearly approaches the native appellation. With their slender figures, their rather white coloration, their prominent cheekbones and their well-shaped and not flattened noses, the "Mousseux" type has a greater affinity with the Indo-European type than with the yellow race type. /142/

though they were supported by Nha-No- '184/ Muong of Muong-La, failed in their march on Luang-Prabang and Intha-Som had no other recourse than to make his submission. He gave up his weapons, took an oath of obedience and fidelity in the pagoda of Xieng-Thong, and was given permission to live in the capital, where he settled near the Vat-Visoun with a large retinue of Mousseux.

He was quite determined not to keep his word. The king, moreover, was not at all worried and did not even have him watched.

648* bands, was given by the latter to Auguste Pavie who placed
175* it in the Quai d'Orsay Library. See below, p. 295.

The chroniclers seem to attach considerable importance to these missions to China. They dwell on each of them in detail and mention the most futile incidents along the way, the names of the envoys, of the camacs and even of the elephants (2). Indeed, the

2. A third mission left Luang-Prabang in 1739. Intha-Som did not send the fourth until 1745 and instructed it to ask the emperor, by reason of the length and difficulty of the voyage, to accept four elephants every ten years. This proposal was accepted by the Chinese government.

support which Intha-Som was seeking from the emperors of Pekin was of capital importance /192/ to the principality, whose isolation on the peninsula was then complete.

643* Conspiracy of Saia-Sane (1740). This long forty-nine year
175* reign was a tranquil one at home, if we except one attempted re-
/662/ bellion, which was quickly repressed, by Saia-Sane, a son of Khamone-Noi. The conspiracy was discovered and Saia-Sane was at once arrested with his partisans and executed at the junction of Houei-Hop (around 1740).

Death of the heir apparent Tiao-Mang (1749). In accordance with the promise which he had made Thene-Sao when he took her as his wife, the king designated the eldest of the sons which this princess bore him as his successor, but the young man, who was named Tiao-Mang, fell into the water during a ride in a pirogue, took a chill and died of congestion at the age of fifteen (1749) (1).

1. Thene-Sao bore him three sons and a daughter, Thene-Kham bore him two sons and three daughters, and a third wife, Nang-Thep-Boupha bore him two sons and a daughter.

648* Difficulties with Annam (1750). At about the same time Intha-
175* Som received a message from the king of Annam demanding the pay-
● 721 ment of tribute. Indeed, this monarch (2) regarded /193/ the

2. Le-Hien-Tong.

agreement to which Ong-Hue had subscribed in 1696 as binding on all of Lan-Xang and was surprised that the king of Luang-Prabang had not taken part in it. 648* 175* 721

Intha-Som had participated too actively in the events which had preceded and followed the division of Lan-Xang for him ever to accept a yoke which neither he nor his elder brother had sought. He therefore gave a categorical refusal to the king of Annam's claims, and his troops drove out of the country the Annamite detachment of General Chiem-Thiem who had been sent by his master to go and obtain tribute manu militari (1).

1. The "Biographies" quoted by Ch. B. Maybon in his Histoire moderne du pays d'Annam place this event in 1771, but this source seems rather unreliable. The chroniclers, who confuse Vientiane with Luang-Prabang, are obviously unaware of the existence of several Laotian principalities at this time, and relate without further explanation that "the king of Laos succeeded in capturing Annamite soldiers by treachery and sent them as prisoners to the king of Siam, with their gongs and their standards." This latter detail would nevertheless have merited some commentary.

It may seem surprising that Annam did not react immediately but let this failure pass. This was because that State was then living in complete anarchy, despite its territorial expansion which had been progressively increasing for three centuries. The king reigned but did not govern, and the kingdom's affairs were in the hands of /194/ dignitaries -- the Trinh in the north and the Nguyen in the south -- whose powers and exactions are singularly reminiscent of the palace mayors of our do-nothing kings. There were nothing but conspiracies and insurrections which paralyzed the government's action abroad and which were already preparing the terrible revolt of the Tay-Son whose authors, in 1774, were to make a clean sweep of the established state of things (1).

1. Between 1750 and 1776 the chronological documents of Luang-Prabang show gaps which Pavie's translators have filled in the most whimsical fashion. Thus they give 1749 as the date of Intha-Som's death and name one of his sons whom they call Intha-Prom as the vanquisher of the Annamites-- 175*

648* Panas, and married a princess of Muong-La in 1782. In the same
175* year he sent out an embassy to take the decennial tribute to Pekin.
643* /198/ He died prematurely in 1787 without leaving any posterity.

Interregnum, 1787-1791. Tiao-Vong's brothers could not agree
648* on a successor, and for four years Luang-Prabang was without a
721 king.
175* Ong-Boun's son Chao-Nan profited by this in order to invade the principality. In the face of this danger Anourout, the second son of Thene-Kham and Intha-Som, assumed power and organized the resistance. Although the Annals make no mention thereof, he probably had to appeal to the Siamese alliance, and even if the king of Bangkok did not intervene directly he at least took action, in the common interest, against the perpetual incursions of the Burmese into his own territory. It may well be that the Siamese avoided taking any side, feeling that a new war would weaken both principalities and could only serve their own ends.

ANOUROUT, KING 1791-1817.

726 Siege and capture of Luang-Prabang by Chao-Nan, king of
175* Vientiane (1791). When besieged by the Vientiane troops Luang-Prabang /199/ put up a fierce resistance and succumbed only because of treachery on the part of Tiao-Vong's widow.

We may assume that the latter was dissatisfied over her brother-in-law's accession to the throne and gave ear to Chao-Nan's proposals regarding the family dissensions.

Popular tradition has preserved several accounts of this war which differ as regards the circumstances under which Luang-Prabang was captured. According to one version, "shots were fired from within and from without, but without meeting." The people of Vientiane finally grew short of food and made ready to raise the siege. It was then that Chao-Nan is supposed to have sent "Anourout's sister" (his sister-in-law, to be precise) a note in which he promised to marry her if she would have one of the city gates opened for him. "It depends only on you," he wrote her, "for me to be a conqueror and for you to become queen of a reconstituted Lan-Xang." Seduced by this proposal, the princess is supposed to have placed a trusted servant at the Pak-Man gate and sent word to Chao-Nan that he could enter. "She put her letter in a bamboo tube which she filled with powder, and sent her device into the enemy camp. The addressee received the epistle, got the keys within three /200/ days, took Luang-Prabang and married the princess."

century, on the eve of the Burmese invasions, they exercised a veritable suzerainty over all of Cambodia. 648* 175*

in the Cochinchinese delta. A great many adventurers, vagabonds, deserters, proscripts and miscreants who had been driven out of Annam had come to settle in these rich alluvial lands, "which held forth the promise of fertile harvests of all the fruits of the earth," and the Nguyen had soon used the settlement of these "colonists" as a pretext for taking pieces of territory, bit by bit, from the kings of Cambodia. The latter, who had already been despoiled of their western provinces by Siam, had offered only slight resistance, and it was in the theater of their /207/ dynastic convulsions that the Siamese and Annamites had first confronted one another.

The Burmese invasions had momentarily paralyzed the kings 721
of Ayuthya, but scarcely had Phia-Tak warded off the catastrophe 175*
of 1767 when the new king of Thanaboury resumed the traditional 648*
Siamese policy towards Cambodia and invaded this unhappy land yet another time as far as Chaudoc and Hatien (1772-1774). It was then for the first time that a Siamese army had come face to face with Annamite troops. The soldiers of the Cochinese governor Dam had brought Phia-Tak's march to a sudden halt, and since the latter was still too deeply involved with the Burmese he had broken off fighting and fallen back to Nam-Van (Pnompenh).

By driving the Nguyen out of Cochinchina the Tay-Son revolt 648*
had arisen in so opportune a way as to leave the field open to the 175*
Siamese once again, and General Chakkri had been placing the country under military occupation when he had suddenly been recalled to Thanaboury by the king's madness (1782).

He had assumed the crown himself, and a few years later had welcomed the fugitive and proscribed Nguyen-Anh as he wandered from island to island in the Gulf of Siam. He had even given him an armed fleet to combat the Tay-Son, but /208/ the Nguyen heir had been defeated at Rach-Gam and had returned to Bangkok discouraged(1785). With the passage of time the sentiments of the Siamese court changed. Although he had participated with honor in an expedition against the Burmese, the young prince of Annam had gradually come to be treated as a quasi-prisoner. He had finally fled to Hon-Tre, from there to Phu-Quoc and then to Ha-Tien (1787), from which point he was to reconquer Cochinchina with the Bishop of Adran's handful of Frenchmen (1).

1. Cf. Schreiner, Abrege d'histoire d'Annam, 1906. Siam's

Kha

result. But the Kha ideal is to possess a battery of gongs of different sizes and timbres, and with these they manage to obtain quite perfect chords.

Industry. Withdrawn in their mountains where they live in small isolated groups, the Khas use their leisure time to make many basket-work and hollow-ware products which have a mark of elegance and a great deal of delicacy. Other tribes make paper from wood pulp, weave mats from rattan and bamboo bark, etc. They use all these products in trade.

Finally, certain Khas exploit deposits of iron ore and transform it into farming implements, while others wash gold-bearing sands.

In general, although the Khas are industrious they work only to procure what is strictly indispensable. They cannot resign themselves to staying away from home for any length of time and dread any stay in the low country, which they say is unhealthy for them. Since they have particular aptitudes for woodcutting, however, they have been successfully employed to cut teak wood in the forests on the right bank of the Mekong which are situated in Siamese territory. But it must be admitted that there they are in mountainous country and in the midst of forests, as in their native region.

The Khas of southern Laos. In southern Laos Khas are found who differ very little from those of Upper Laos. We shall not concern ourselves with them, but shall deal briefly with the many more numerous ones who have particular mores and customs.

The Djarais, the Rades, the Bahnars, the Cedangs, the Peunongs, the Rognaos (1), etc. are the principal types of these Kha tribes.

(1) See Appendix XVIII.

which for the most part are still independent.

These people are proud, large and muscular, supple, trained in all forms of bodily exercise, bold, warlike and brave.

These qualities, moreover, have been developed by their peculiar way of [257] [Illustration] [258] [Blank page] [259] life. Accustomed to hunting slaves from which they extracted large profits by selling them on the banks of the Mekong, these Khas have had to resort to continual expeditions in order to obtain their human game.

For many long years, in fact, they could acquire [Illustration here] the gongs, buffalo, metals, textiles, etc. which they needed only by selling captives, generally Annamites, whom they went and